

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

Entered July 22, 2002

IN THE MATTER OF PROTECTING	§	
PERSONAL PRIVACY IN PUBLIC	§	GENERAL ORDER NO. 2002-9
CASE FILES	§	

ORDER

This Order amends General Order No. 2002-7, dated June 10, 2002.

Based on the policy of the Judicial Conference of the United States, and in order to promote electronic access to case files while also protecting personal privacy and other legitimate interests, it is ORDERED that the parties shall refrain from including, or shall redact where inclusion is necessary, the following personal identifiers from all pleadings filed with the court, including exhibits thereto, whether filed electronically or in paper, unless otherwise ordered by the Court.

- a. **Social Security Numbers**. If an individual's social security number must be included in a pleading, only the last four digits of that number should be used.
- b. **Names of minor children**. If the involvement of a minor must be mentioned, only the initials of that child should be used.
- c. **Dates of birth**. If an individual's date of birth must be included in a pleading, only the year should be used.

d. Financial account numbers. If financial account numbers are relevant, only the last four digits of these numbers should be used.

While the current Judicial Conference policy allows only limited electronic access in criminal cases, this Order shall nevertheless apply to filings by the parties in criminal cases, absent a showing of compelling reasons to disclose the personal identifiers listed above. For filings in Bankruptcy Court, because of conflicting bankruptcy statutes and rules, this Order shall apply only to personal identifiers b and c, pertaining to names of minor children and dates of birth. The Order does not apply to social security and financial account numbers in Bankruptcy Court filings.

The responsibility for redacting these personal identifiers rests solely with counsel and the parties. The Clerk will not review each pleading for compliance with this rule. Counsel and the parties are cautioned that failure to redact these personal identifiers may subject them to appropriate disciplinary proceedings.

DONE at Laredo, Texas, this 22nd of July, 2002.

/s/
Chief United States District Judge